

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

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Claim 1 (Currently amended): A method for measuring potential tumorigenicity of mammalian cells comprising:

- a. providing a ~~tissue sample or~~ sample of medium surrounding cells, and
- b. detecting the presence of a fragment of  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan in medium, said fragment having an Mr of 120-130kD, whereby the presence of the fragment indicates higher potential tumorigenicity.

Claim 2 (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein said detecting comprises:

- a. adding to said sample a material selected from the group consisting of a monoclonal antibody to  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan and laminin, and
- b. measuring the size of the  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan fragment detected.

Claim 3 (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein said cells are human mammary epithelial cells.

Claim 4 (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein said medium is blood serum.

Claim 5 (Original): A method for measuring potential tumorigenicity of cells, comprising:

- a. providing a sample of said cells, and
- b. detecting the presence of  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan on the surface of the cells, whereby the absence of  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan indicates a higher potential for tumorigenicity.

Claim 6 (Original): The method of claim 5, wherein said detecting comprises:

- a. adding to said sample a monoclonal antibody to  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan, and
- b. measuring the amount of labeled  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan detected.

Claim 7 (Original): The method of claim 5, wherein said cells are human mammary epithelial cells.

Claim 8 (Original): The method of claim 5, wherein said detecting comprises measurement of the amount of  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan relative to the amount of  $\beta$ -dystroglycan, wherein a relative

decrease of  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan indicates  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan shedding and higher potential tumorigenicity.

*cancelled A*  
Claims 9 – 21 (~~Withdrawn~~).

Claim 22 (Previously amended): A method of assaying proteolysed  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan fragments shed from a cell into blood serum comprising the steps of:

a. contacting a serum sample to be assayed with a labeled antibody specific for an  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan fragment, and

b. assaying the amount of bound label,

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wherein said  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan fragments bound to said labeled antibody are positively correlated with tumor cell growth.

Claim 23 (Original): The method of Claim 22, wherein the  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan fragment is an approximately 120 kD fragment.

Claim 24 (Original): The method of Claim 22, wherein the  $\alpha$ -dystroglycan fragment is an approximately 60 kD fragment.

*cancelled A*  
Claims 25 – 28 (~~Withdrawn~~).

Claim 29 (Previously added): The method of claim 22, wherein said cell is an epithelial cell.

Claim 30 (Previously added): The method of claim 29, wherein said epithelial cell is a breast epithelial cell.

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